

What is Claimed Is:

1. Apparatus for use in a gas grill, having a burner with a central opening and a pilot, for shutting off the flow of gas extinguishing the flame when a cooking utensil is removed from the burner and for opening the flow of gas for automatic ignition by the pilot when the cooking utensil is placed on the burner comprising:

a mechanically operated valve having gas inlet and gas outlet ports, and being positioned on the grill remote from the burner;

a valve actuator arm having a pivot closely adjacent one end in spaced relation to the valve and extending laterally beneath the burner and being spring biased upwardly toward the burner on the other end; and

an actuator member supported by the other end of the valve actuator arm above the burner for receiving the cooking utensil when placed on the burner;

whereby the actuator arm is pivotally supported adjacent the one end and is spring biased upwardly providing an elongated lever member between the cooking utensil and the valve being of greater length than a portion of the actuator arm in laterally spaced relation to the valve adjacent the one end.

2. The apparatus set forth in claim 1 wherein the actuator member has an upright component integral therewith extending upwardly through the burner.

3. The apparatus set forth in claim 2 wherein the upright component has an offset end for clearing grill support members and for providing central support for the cooking utensil.

4. The apparatus set forth in claim 2 wherein the valve is located in closely spaced relation to the pivot and remote from said other end.

5. The apparatus set forth in claim 2 wherein the valve actuator arm is spring biased upwardly by a coil torsion spring located upon the pivot.

6. The apparatus set forth in claim 5 wherein the upward motion of the valve actuator arm is limited and at its uppermost location positions the actuator ring in an inclined position to receive a cooking utensil.

7. A method for use of a gas grill, having a burner with a central opening and a pilot comprising the steps of :

providing a mechanically operated valve having gas inlet and gas outlet ports, and being positioned on the grill remote from the burner;

pivotally mounting a valve actuator arm adjacent one end in laterally spaced relation to the valve;

opening the flow of gas for automatic ignition by the pilot when the cooking utensil is placed on the burner; and

shutting off the flow of gas extinguishing the flame when a cooking utensil is removed from the burner; and

positioning an actuator member on the valve actuator arm above the burner for receiving the cooking utensil when placed on the burner.